

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN JO 04484 210012Z

64

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 EB-11 AID-20 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03

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R 202210Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5818

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 4484

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT FIGUERES' CHRISTMAS ADDRESS

1. PRESIDENT JOSE FIGUERES DELIVERED HIS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO THE NATION VIA RADIO AND TELEVISION, DECEMBER 19. HIS ADDRESS WAS UNEVENTFUL, UPBEAT, AND CONTAINED NO SURPRISES. THE PRESIDENT LED OFF ASSETING THAT HE WAS NO LONGER SOLELY CONCERNED WITH POVERTY IN COSTA RICA, BUT WEALTH AS WELL, "EVEN THOUGH SOME TELL ME THIS IS PREMATURE." "WE MUST EDUCATE OURSELVES FOR ABUNDANCE BECAUSE THE ECONOMY AND COUNTRY ARE GOING DANGEROUSLY WELL."

2. TURNING TO THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN, WHICH HE TERMED "THAT BSPECT OF THE COUNTRY THAT WAS PERHAPS GOING A LITTLE POORLY," FIGUERES REMARKED THAT THE OPPOSITION HAD LAUNCHED MANY UNJUST CHARGES AGAINST HIS ADMINISTRATION, "WHEN THEY SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR WHAT THIS GOVERNMENT HAS DONE." THE PRESIDENT ALSO PRAISED THE LABORS OF THE SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL, AND NOTED THAT COSTA RICA IS ONE OF THE FEW COUNTRIES WHICH ENJOYS ELECTORAL FREEDOM.

3. FIGUERES THEN ANNOUNCED THAT THE GASOLINE PROBLEM HAD BEEN RESOLVED IN COSTA RICA AND CLAIMED THAT SUFFICIENT FUEL FOR LACSA AND DIESEL FOR TRUCKS WAS ASSURED. NONETHELESS, HE URGED HIS COUNTRYMEN TO REDUCE PLEASURE
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PAGE 02 SAN JO 04484 210012Z

DRIVING AND TO UTILIZE CAR POOLS TO REDUCE FUEL CONSUMPTION.

HE CRITIZED HARSHLY THE ARABS AND SAID THAT THE WORLD'S REPULSION TO THE RECENT SLAUGHTER IN ROME MIGHT OBLIGE THE ARABS TO END THEIR FUEL EMBARGO. THE PRESIDENT ALSO PRAISED VENETBELA'S HELP IN RESOLVING COSTA RICA'S FUEL PROBLEMS AND NOTED THAT PRESIDENT-ELECT CARLOS ANDRESS PEREZ, WHO HAD LIVED IN EXILE HERE SEVEN YEARS, WAS A "GREAT FRIEND OF COSTA RICA."

4. BY WAY OF CONCLUDING, THE PRESIDENT PROPOSED SEVERAL MEASURES TO DEAL WITH THE PITFALLS OF THE PASSAGE TO AN ABUNDANT SOCIETY INCLUDING, RECOMMENDATIONS THAT THE POPULACE SAVE MORE AND BUY INVESTMENT BONDS, THAT HALF OF THE OBLIGATORY CHRISTMAS BONUS BE PAID IN MARCH TO MEET SCHOOL EXPENSES, THAT THE ASSEMBLY PASS HIS FAMILY SUBSIDY PROGRAM FOR THE POOR, AND THAT AN UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM REPLACE THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF SEVERANCE PAY (CESANTIA).
VAKY

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